

throw of their oppressors? We can not think so, nor can Professor Loria. To him it is obvious that Marx was a failure as a theorist of political economy, and that his supreme merit lies in

having been the first to introduce the evolutionary concept into the domain of sociology, the first to introduce it in the only form appropriate to social phenomena and social institutions; not as the unceasing and gradual upward-movement outlined by Spencer, but as the succession of age-long cycles rhythmically interrupted by revolutionary explosions, proceeding in the manner sketched by Lyell for geological evolution and in our own time by de Vries for biological evolution.

Thus, continues the author, Marx was able to overthrow the classical economic science, "taken prisoner by its own notion of a petrified society," and the philosophy of law and idealist socialism, "which were convinced that it was possible to mould the world in accordance with the arbitrary conceptions of the thinker." It was in the light of this concept, too, that his appeal to the proletariat was illuminated and raised far above the cry of the mob orator and that the world is slowly becoming convinced that the present forms of society are not the ultimate, nor the penultimate, and still less the ideal forms.

It is, after all, in the great, broad framework of the Marxian theory that the student to-day perceives events slowly shaping themselves and recognizes the insignificance of the squabbles among the followers of Marx, revisionists and syndicalists, communists and centrists—squabbles which long ago made Marx himself protest, "I am not a Marxist." Despite them and through them, the Marxian system remains an invincible, ever-working force of theory and organization in the minds of men who may be unconscious of its origin but submit to its influence. To prove it, even in this country, where the word radicalism is suspect, socialism is outcast, and communism the abomination of desolation, we have only to note the existing "gigantic tumult of ideas, facts, claims, assaults, wounds, innovating reconstructions," leading our most respectable citizens to indiscretions unworthy of their forefathers: the voice is the voice of Capitalism but the words are the words of Marx. In Europe we can register with Professor Loria "the conviction rooted in the mind of every thinker that the economic order is subject to unceasing change, is advancing towards predestined destruction," and agree that "the proletarian masses, regarded by the science and art of the past as a crushed and pitiful appendage of the bourgeois economy, now appear to contemporary science as the most vigorous among the forces tending to disintegrate that economy, as tending irresistibly to create a higher and better balanced form of association." If this is necromancy, the necromancer is Karl Marx.

CHARLES R. HARGROVE.

AN ARGENTINE CRITIC.

Soyez forts, mes enfants, en haïssant la guerre.—HENRY JACQUES in "Nous . . . de la Guerre."

SEÑOR CARLOS IBARGUREN's book on "Literature and the Great War" is the product of a mind alert to contemporary influences, sympathetic in the interpretation of the works that exemplify those influences, and aware of the social implications and derivations of literature and literary change. Despite the general title of the book, the author's emphasis from first to last is placed upon the part played by French letters; it is in this aspect of his subject that the author is most at home, most copious in extracts and most successful in elucidation. It is true, perhaps, that thus far the best war-literature has come out of France; and it is not surprising therefore that Señor Ibarguren should devote the major part of his attention to the products of that country and particularly to French poets whose verses, so far as the United States is concerned, have been overwhelmed by the swarm of translations that followed the English edition of M. Barbusse's "Under Fire." It is indeed chiefly for the section of his work dealing with French literature that Señor

¹ "La Literatura y la Gran Guerra." Carlos Ibarguren. Buenos Aires: Co-operation Editorial Zimitada.

Ibarguren's book will be of interest to readers everywhere. His paragraphs upon the war-literature of England and Germany are far from adequate, telling, as they do, very little that is not already known to Americans on both sides of the Rio Grande. But how much is known in this country of the poems of Henry Jacques, Paul Verlet, Maurice Bouignol? Yet Jacques, whom Señor Ibarguren calls the Barbusse of poetry, has written lines that scar the memory like trenches cut through a wheatfield:

*Héros—si ça vous chante . . . héros, non sans reproches
Et non sans peur, craignant la crainte, pas les Boches.*

For him no gaudy flag-waving and prettified writing such as becomes the patriots behind the lines. He has been through the ordeal by fire and steel, and knows what cannon-fodder means.

*C'est avec eux qu'on fait l'histoire,
Poux de crêneau, chair à canon;
Nul ne saura jamais leur nom . . .
C'est ça qu'on appelle la gloire!*

*Héros? Ça fait bien dans un livre,
Croix en toc des morts inconnus.
Ils sont moins, ils sont parfois plus.
Héros? C'est vaincre . . . mieux, c'est vivre.*

The note is common to all genuine war-poets. They are possessed by a vehement desire to taste the mere sensation of existence. When one of them walks into a charnel-house he thanks the corpses for giving him a keener realization of what it is just to breathe the life-giving air.

In the work of the German war-writers, the author finds a tendency to build upon the imagination rather than upon that reality which is never absent from the French mind. He criticizes Leonhard Frank for "sentimental hallucination," for "visionary mysticism." Yet at the conclusion of his book, Señor Ibarguren himself is not free from something very like the "literature" and sentimentalism that he condemns in Barbusse and Frank. Forgetting his early chapters, he fails to perceive the economic and social substructure of the later works, and speaks of sacrifice and abnegation in the precise tones of our *ante bellum* preachers.

The individual has not, as Señor Ibarguren seems to believe, disappeared in the social mass; nor does the way to human betterment lie in such a needless renunciation. When Jacques and Verlet sing in their different ways of the sensuous joy of being alive, it is because they resent that self-annihilating subsidence into the mass which war connotes. If their poetry is to fire men with a new spirit, it will help men so to readjust society as to permit the individual to emerge from it, unhampered by artificial obstacles, and by that effete idealism which betrayed them into the recent conflict.

Señor Ibarguren's attitude is refreshingly tolerant and humane. This quality has been strengthened, no doubt, by his reading of these French poets who feared fear more than they feared the Boches, and who faced war for the dirty thing it is, in the hope of bequeathing peace to their children. His book is a good example of the better kind of criticism that is now being produced in Argentina; it is, moreover, free from that easily acquired encyclopaedic erudition that too many of his countrymen are fond of flaunting.

ISAAC GOLDBERG.

AN OLD MAN'S CHRONICLE.

BENVENUTO CELLINI, in counselling men of parts to write their autobiographies, warns them against attempting the task before they are turned forty. He might well have added that they ought not to defer it until they are all but nonagenarians. With some such melancholy reflection many an admirer of Wilhelm Wundt will lay down the book of memories issued but a few days before the veteran philosopher's death.¹ It is not that the moderately-sized volume is devoid of interest, but it is so

¹ "Erlebtes und Erkanntes." Wilhelm Wundt. Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner.

different from what it might have been, and it is so tantalizing to have to make apologies on the score of senility where one would so gladly have voiced a joyous admiration. Worse than that, the horrible suspicion arises that perhaps, after all, those disparaging American psychologists were in the right who so blandly echoed James's opinion that the learned Wundt, for all his erudition, was merely a very commonplace and rather dull scholar.

No, the scoffers are in the wrong; yet it is impossible with the material at hand in this volume to feel Wundt as a vivid individuality. Avowedly not an autobiography in the current sense, this book might nevertheless have been expected to reveal more of its author's intimate life-history if he had been interesting as a personality. As things stand, he appears merely as a cultured German burgher with the well-known generic traits—unpretentiousness in the externals of life, a love of beautiful scenery, the inevitable Shakespeare mania, and simplicity in matters political. It is this last-mentioned characteristic that leads to the ignominious anti-climax of the concluding fifty pages. There all the preposterous fictions with which the defeated German bourgeois doctored his self-esteem are served up anew, thinly disguised by some philosophical garnishings. As late as August, 1920, Wundt was able to believe in the military triumph of the Fatherland, which of course was thwarted solely by the villainy of the socialists, whose capacity for evil was itself the outcome of the insidious intrusion of alien parliamentary notions. Interspersed among these commonplaces of a balked nationalism are solemn reflections on the moral grandeur of Teutonic idealism as contrasted with the meanness of Western European utilitarianism. Worse than these distortions of political facts and national psychology is the perverse bowdlerization of the aim of philosophic effort, which Wundt reduces to a purely ethical level as though epistemology were not the core and *raison d'être* of all philosophy.

When, however, we have drawn the curtain of charity over these outpourings of senility, enough remains to attract and stimulate. For one thing, a gentle sense of humour sporadically asserts itself. Thus there is an amusing peep at Wundt's parents in the tale of a marketing incident. The thrifty housewife was beating down prices with a vengeance until her reverend husband felt duty-bound to take the dealer's part; but then the conscience-smitten merchant ejaculated that, after all, he could afford to come down a bit. Again, there is the episode of Wundt's attempt to popularize Mayer's views on the conservation of energy. The lecturer was surprised to find the hall crowded with doddering old folk till a chance remark after his talk showed that the audience had come expecting to learn how to maintain their bodily vigour. In the same category may be mentioned Wundt's story of his admission into the Baden Chamber of Deputies under the designation of a wine-merchant. It seems that according to an ancient law only followers of certain occupations were deemed eligible to serve as representatives of the people and among these favoured few were the purveyors of spirituous beverages. By a later legal fiction, however, members of various other professions lost their disability provided they acquired a dealer's license, and thus Wundt was duly elected as a wine-merchant in the accepted Pickwickian sense.

The passages in which these events are recorded represent the biographical strain that mingles somewhat capriciously with the stream of exposition foreshadowed by the title. It forms of course by far the more interesting section of the book. Considering the number of distinguished men Wundt met in the course of his long career, his reminiscences of them one feels are unduly meagre. For example, his early popularizing efforts brought him into contact with Bebel, and it seems rather unfair to leave the reader with a bare mention of the great labour-leader's name. To be sure, in Bebel's memories Wundt is dismissed with like curtness, but such an operation of poetic justice yields little consolation to the inquisitive bystander. Even about his immediate predecessors in the field of exact psychology, Weber

and Fechner, the author is singularly uncommunicative, though what he vouchsafes is significant. While regarding Fechner as the most original thinker of his period, Wundt considers Weber rather than Fechner the founder of experimental psychology and points out that Fechner's interest in the study of the mind for its own sake was slight, being merely a reflex of his passionate devotion to problems of a religious bearing. This is probably a trifle too strong an estimate in view of Fechner's later contribution to experimental aesthetics.

On several other scholars clear-cut judgments are passed, some of which will stick in the reader's memory. Of Bunsen's lectures Wundt gives a graphic picture. The great chemist cared not a fig for systematically covering the range of his subject, but confined himself exclusively to the problems that had engaged his personal attention. He transplanted his auditors into the field of novel research and created the illusion that they themselves were enlarging the bounds of knowledge. While Bunsen is described from the professorial angle, some of Helmholtz's personal traits are brought into relief, especially his preternatural taciturnity. The nature of his investigations remained a secret to his own assistants and even to his more intimate colleagues. His pedagogical skill is illuminated by the story of the apparatus he described in one of his lectures without a word about its use. In his home, by the way, the great man relaxed his restraint and on occasion even stooped to burlesque. The favourite "indoor sport" at his domestic entertainments, however, was the reading of classical dramas. An odd usage prevailed in the assignment of parts, which were determined by the guests' social status, so that an elderly privy councillor might figure as Hamlet while a poor *Privatdozent* had to content himself with the humble rôle of Guildenstern.

The expository sections of the autobiography are partly dull and for the most part do not articulate naturally with the life history. But occasionally the ripe wisdom of years of study stands forth unalloyed in concentrated form, as in the admirable pages on the value of the history of philosophy. Altogether his historical point of view, so far as it is not warped by political bias, merits the fullest commendation.

Thus [we read], history yields the most effective correction of the prejudice naturally arising from the dogmatic branches, that a fixed condition is the only possible and final one. At least it refutes that widespread preference of the present as compared with the past, which springs from an unwarrantable transfer of certain external cultural advances, such as technical appliances and economic intercourse, to the spiritual values of life; for while these are in some fashion connected with them, they do not by any means go hand in hand with them. Herein, then, lies a special advantage of the history of philosophy, that it counteracts the notion all too readily awakened by the contemplation of other domains, viz., the notion of an unlimited progress, a conception as perverse as the hypothesis of retrogression. Both are products of a one-sided view that can never do justice to all aspects of culture.

A mosaic of unequal fragments, a mixture of vivid sketches and tedious didacticism, of serene wisdom and biased nationalism—that is how I should briefly define the quality and character of Wundt's last book.

ROBERT H. LOWIE.

SHORTER NOTICES.

THE fundamental scheme of English village life remains unchanged through many centuries. The Roman patrician gives way to the Saxon thane; the Saxon thane is displaced by the Norman baron; the Norman baron is gradually transformed into the modern squire. But the village is always dominated by the castle or manor house; and one generation of villagers after another pays tribute, in the form of service or rent, to the feudal lord. Mr. Ditchfield, in his study of "Old Village Life," passes hastily over the Roman and Saxon periods in order to give a more extended account of village life in mediæval and modern times: the festivals and outdoor plays, the May Day dances, the impressive ecclesiastical ceremonies, the important contributions made by the guilds. Much of the traditional prejudice of the Episcopal clergyman enters into

¹ "Old Village Life." P. H. Ditchfield. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company.